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TAGS: OPRC KMDR TU PREL KPAO
SUBJECT: TURKISH MEDIA REACTION
TUESDAY, JULY 7, 2009

In Today's Papers

The Presidency Consults European Law Regarding Draft Bill Allowing Civil Courts To Try Military Personnel
Mainstream Milliyet and liberal Radikal report that before President Gul decides on whether to approve the controversial bill allowing the trial of military personnel in civilian courts, Gul asked his judicial advisers to examine the bill according to the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights and EU regulations regarding civilian trials for military personnel. Mainstream Vatan reports that President Gul will announce his decision within 48 hours and that he is likely to approve the law but also warn the government to ease the concerns of the military.

Editorial Commentary on Draft Bill Allowing Civilian Courts to Try Military Personnel

Fikret Bila wrote in mainstream Milliyet: "While President Gul hasn't made a decision on whether to approve the bill allowing civilian courts to try military personnel, he asked his judicial advisers to examine the bill not only based on domestic law, but also in accordance with the rulings of the European Court of Human Rights, and EU regulations regarding the subject. Meanwhile, the military insists that the ECHR has no problems with the military judiciary, the regulation violates the constitution and the regulation will cause conflicts between the civilian and military courts."

DTP Mayors to Meet With President Gul

Sabah, Milliyet, CNN Turk: Today's papers and TV channels report that, after failing to get a meeting from PM Erdogan, officials from the mainly Kurdish opposition party DTP have launched a new effort toward the settlement of the Kurdish issue by meeting with President Gul tomorrow. Diyarbakir Mayor Osman Baydemir and six other DTP Mayors will come to Ankara tomorrow to meet President Gul and present him with a "Kurdish file" with suggestions to resolve the Kurdish issue.

Labor Unions Decide to Strike

Mainstream Hurriyet and leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet report that labor union Turk-Is will hold a one-hour strike today to protest the collective-bargaining talks with the government. Turk-Is President

Mustafa Kumlu said the goal of the protests is to force a deal but not to create problems, notes Sabah. The Revolutionary Labor Unions Confederation (DISK) announced that it would support the one-hour strike of Turk-Is with the participation of all its members in the public sector, adds Cumhuriyet.

Chinese Police Open Fire on Uighur Protestors (Islamist-oriented Zaman)

Media call attention to the clashes in Xinjiang as an ethnic war between Han Chinese and Muslim Turkic Uighurs. The political left, the political right, the secularists and the Islamists outlets all express a great deal of sympathy for the Uighurs, and just last week President Gul made a visit to Urumqi during his state visit to China. Mainstream Hurriyet headlines, "Xinjian Massacre," and the paper notes, "Chinese security forces violently intervene to silence protests in China's Uighur autonomous region." Mainstream Haberturk headlines, "Ethnic War Breaks Out Between The Chinese and The Uighurs," as "a peaceful demonstration turned bloody when police used brute force and turned the city into a sea of blood." Mainstream Sabah calls the clashes, "The Uighurs' Tiananmen." Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet writes, "Clashes explode between the Han and the Uighurs when Chinese police opened fire on a demonstration." Islamist-oriented Yeni Safak writes, "The Chinese administration launches a Uighur hunt in Xinjiang Autonomous Region one week after President Gul's visit," to China. In "A Call from Ankara to Beijing For Justice," leftist Taraf reports "Protestors gathered outside the Chinese Consulate in Istanbul to chant 'China Is A Murderer' and 'Get Out of Turkistan,'" and the paper also notes far right nationalist party MHP leader Devlet Bahceli told the press, "The Uighur Turks' humanitarian drama is a very sensitive

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topic for the Turkish nation." Liberal Radikal notes, "China Has Once Again Shed Blood While Putting Down A Uighur Rebellion."

A New Era Between the Giants. (Leftist Taraf)

Media call the meetings between U.S. President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitri Medvedev "a new beginning" as the two leaders declared they will reduce the number of nuclear weapons in their stockpiles by one-third. Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet headlines, "A New Page For the U.S. and Russia," as, "The Decision Is Made To Reduce Nuclear Weapons." Islamist-oriented Zaman carries the front-page headline, "They Have Agreed To Reduce Nuclear Weapons," and the article notes, "The atmosphere was warm between the two leaders during their meetings." In "A Forced Truce in Moscow," mainstream Milliyet points out, "Obama and Medvedev have come together to give the message that this summit marks 'a new beginning' for U.S.-Russia relations, but on the other hand they note 'we can't solve all of our problems in a few hours.'" Leftist Taraf notes, "The two leaders agreed to reduce nuclear weapons stockpiles, but the disagreement on missile installations continues."

Editorial Commentary on Turkey-US-Russia Ties

Erdal Saglam wrote in mainstream Hurriyet: "Meetings between the U.S. and Russia have the potential to affect future global policy and the balances of power. Turkey plays a role in this equation as well and must position itself carefully. The most important for Turkey is, of course, energy cooperation. Turkey's been seriously close to Russia regarding energy issues for a while. Most of the domestic energy projects were awarded to companies close to the AKP administration. But how will this 'strategic cooperation' between Turkey and Russia affect U.S.-Turkey relations? Turkey should avoid conflicts between the government institutions and should not put its interests in danger. And the leaders should know what they're doing regarding national and international policy."

Asli Aydintasbas wrote in mainstream Aksam: "The U.S. does not care very much about the rise of conservatism in Turkey, about press freedom and about the role of the Fethullah Gulen movement in Turkish bureaucracy. The U.S. also doesn't prefer to deal with the military over the AKP government regarding discussions of troop withdrawals from northern Iraq. The U.S. continues to cooperate with the government. The important thing for the U.S. is not the domestic conflicts in Turkey, but the protection of U.S. interests."

TV News (CNN Turk)

Domestic

Q Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill held talks with PM Erdogan and Religious Affairs Director Bardakoglu in Ankara yesterday and said Halki Seminary might be re-opened soon.

Q A new indictment detailing charges against Ergenekon suspects will be submitted to the court this week.

Q Russian PM Putin will come to Turkey for a formal visit on August 16.

World

Q U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Philip Gordon says military flights in the Aegean Sea might lead to an accident.

Q The U.S. Embassy in Athens submits to the Greek government a non-paper document on ending tensions in the Aegean.

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Q Deposed President Zelaya is prevented from returning to Honduras and is forced to go to El Salvador.

Q World Bank President Robert Zoellick said "The World Economy is still in danger despite the recent positive signs." JEFFREY